

REMARKS

The computer program product claims 7 - 9 have been amended to include the phrase "embodied on a computer readable storage medium" to more clearly indicate that the claims are not drawn to a computer program per se. Support for the amendment can be found in paragraph 16 of the specification.

The present invention teaches a system and method for allowing a mobile phone to dial into a conference call without having to manually enter the conference call data. The most common type of conference call methods in use require participants to dial in to a central bridge. The central bridge is reached by dialing a specified telephone number. In addition to dialing the telephone number of the bridge, a participant is also required to enter an access code for the particular conference call for that bridge. Thus, the bridge manages access to a conference call according to the access codes. Only those participants entering a valid access code can join the conference call.

Obviously, conference call participants must know in advance the date, time, telephone number for the bridge, and access code for the conference call. This data can be stored in a database within a mobile phone. There are many contact and schedule management software applications capable of storing and maintaining the conference call data.

The present invention assumes that the aforementioned conference call data is stored within the mobile phone regardless of how it got there. Shortly before the scheduled time of the call, the mobile phone will alert the participant that the conference call is scheduled in five minutes, for instance. The alert is followed by a prompt asking whether to connect to the conference call. If the response to the prompt is affirmative, the mobile phone will, automatically, access the conference call data, dial the telephone bridge number, and enter the access code. This is all done without the participant having to manually enter any of the data.

Thus, the participant can quickly, easily, and with minimal effort connect to the conference call. This can be especially beneficial when the participant is otherwise engaged in an activity requiring much attention and would not be able to consult a source for the conference call information and then manually enter it into the mobile phone.

The Todd reference (US 6,760,423 B1) is cited as the primary reference in a 35 USC 103(a) rejection of independent claims 1, 4 and 7. The Examiner broadly states that Todd discloses a method of connecting a mobile phone to a conference call. What Todd discloses is storing a call list comprised of the proposed participants for a conference call and their respective telephone numbers in a client host device. A conference call event is associated with the call list and stored on a database that is either local or external to the host client device in charge of the call list. When the host client is alerted to a conference call it sends the call list to a third party service whose responsibility is to call each member of the call list and connect them to the conference call bridge. Thus the participants in the conference call are contacted by the third party service and invited to join the conference call. Unlike the present invention, Todd shifts the burden of connecting to the conference call away from the individual participants to the network (service).

The Fitser reference (US 5,631,904) is cited as the secondary reference in the 35 USC 103(a) rejection of independent claims 1, 4 and 7. Fitser, like Todd, discloses a method of allowing a host (conference call customer) to initiate a conference call on a bridge by supplying the network with the requisite identification information for the proposed participants. The network then becomes responsible for contacting the participants and bringing them into the conference call. The whole purpose of Todd and Fitser is to remove the burden of having each participant call in to connect to a conference call. The burden, as in Todd, has been shifted to the network under the direction of a single participant or host that supplies the network with the requisite participant data.

The present invention does not shift the burden of connecting to a conference call from the conference call participants to the network. Rather, it provides a system and method of automating the “connection” procedure. Todd and Fitser actually teach away from the present invention by intentionally shifting the burden of connecting to the conference call to the network.

Thus, with respect to independent claims 1, 4 and 7, neither Todd nor Fitser disclose or teach “automatically dialing the telephone number for the conference call upon an affirmative response to the prompt asking whether to connect to the conference call”. This is so because Todd and Fitser disclose methods in which the network calls the participant to invite

them to join the conference call whereas the present invention requires the participant to call the network. It follows that Todd and Fitser do not require a passcode authorizing the participant to join since, in Todd and Fitser, the network reached out to the participant meaning the network has pre-authorized them.

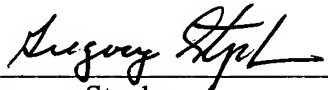
Based on the foregoing, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC 103(a) rejection of claims 1 – 9.

The Examiner is authorized to charge any fees required and not paid herein, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 13-4365.

Respectfully submitted,

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Telephone: (919) 286-8000  
Facsimile: (919) 286-8199

  
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Gregory Stephens  
Attorney for Applicants  
Registration No. 41,329  
Moore & Van Allen PLLC  
430 Davis Drive  
Suite 500  
Morrisville, NC 27560-6832